

For example, a judge might look at the report table filled with zeros in the unresolved cases category, erroneously conclude that a particular country is not of concern, and give permission to an estranged spouse to return to their country with the child for a vacation. The taking parent then abducts the child and the left behind parent then spends her life savings and many years trying to get her child returned to the U.S. All of which could have been avoided with accurate reporting on the danger.

I am very concerned that the first annual report contains major gaps and even misleading information, especially when it comes to countries with which we have the most intractable abduction cases.

For instance, the report indicates that India, which has consistently been in the top five destinations for abducted American children, had 19 new cases in 2014, 22 resolved cases and no unresolved cases. However, we know from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) that India has 53 open abduction cases—and that 51 have been pending for more than 1 year.

The report shows zero new cases in Tunisia for last year, 3 resolved cases, and zero unresolved cases. And yet Ms. Edeanna Barbirou testified to her more than 3-year battle to bring her children home from Tunisia. NCMEC's numbers show 6 ongoing abductions in Tunisia, all of which have been pending for more than a year.

Nowhere is the report's disconnect with reality more clear than in its handling of Japan, a country that has never issued and enforced a return order for a single one of the hundreds of American children abducted there, and was not listed as a country showing failing to cooperate in returns.

In March, nearly two months before the annual report was released, I chaired a hearing in the subcommittee which I chair featuring Ambassador Susan Jacobs in which it was made perfectly clear that, "Congress expects that Japan will be evaluated not just on its handling of new abduction cases after it joined the Hague Convention last year, but on its work to resolve ALL open abduction cases," including the more than 50 cases I and others have been raising with the State Department for the last 5 years.

Among such cases is that of Sgt. Michael Elias, who has not seen his children, Jade and Michael Jr., since 2008. Michael served as a Marine who saw combat in Iraq. His wife, who worked in the Japanese consulate, used documents fraudulently obtained with the apparent complicity of Japanese consulate personnel to kidnap their children, then aged 4 and 2, in defiance of a court order, telling Michael on a phone call that there was nothing that he could do, as "my country will protect me."

Her country, very worried about its designation in the new report, sent a high-level delegation in March to meet with Ambassador Jacobs and explain why Japan should be excused from being listed as "non-compliant," despite the fact that more than one year after signing the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, Japan has ordered zero returns to the U.S.

Just before the report was released in May—two weeks late—Takashi Okada, Deputy Director General in the Secretariat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told the Japanese Diet that he had been in consultation with the

State Department and "because we strived to make an explanation to the U.S. side, I hope that the report contents will be based on our country's efforts."

In other words, Japan got a pass from the State Department and escaped the list of countries facing action by the U.S. for their failure to resolve abduction cases based on what Mr. Okada euphemistically refers to as "efforts," not results.

Sgt. Michael Elias's country has utterly failed to protect him. He has seen zero progress in his case over the last year—the 7th year of his heart-wrenching ordeal—and yet the State Department cannot even bring itself to hold Japan accountable by naming Japan an offender in the annual report.

It is disappointing, discouraging, and disgraceful. The report whitewashes Japan's egregious record on parental child abduction.

Adding insult to injury, the report table that was to show the unresolved abduction cases in Japan failed to include a single one of the more than 50 cases, 36 of which have been dragging on for more than 5 years, according to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Instead, the table listed Japan has having a 43% resolution rate.

Japan has never issued and enforced a return order for an American child. These young victims, like their left-behind parents, are American citizens who need the help of their government.

The Goldman Act is clear: All requests for return that the State Department submitted to the foreign ministry and that remained unresolved 12 months later are to be counted against Japan. Nearly 100% of the abduction cases to Japan remain open; and the report's conclusion of 43% resolution is indefensible.

Moreover, not a single left behind parent pursuing access was allowed in-person contact with their child over the last year.

The Goldman Act has given the State Department new and powerful tools to bring Japan, and other countries, to the resolution table. The goal is not to disrupt relations but to heal the painful rifts caused by international child abduction.

The question still remains, will the State Department use the Goldman Act as required by law?

I appreciate the Department's presence at yesterday's hearing to discuss ways that we can improve the report and ensure that it fulfills the purposes for which it was intended—namely, the prevention of abduction and the reunification of the thousands of American families that have been suffering forced separation for too long.

WELCOMING THE TAIPEI ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL OFFICE, TECO, TO DENVER

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 12, 2015*

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to welcome the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, TECO, to the city of Denver. The establishment of this important office in Denver is a testament to the strong relationship the people of Colorado have developed over the years with the people of Taiwan. Colorado counts

Taiwan as its 6th largest Asian trading partner and its 13th overall trading partner. Locating this office in Denver not only reflects the depth of our current relationship with Taiwan but will surely contribute to deepening our trade, education, and cultural ties in the coming years.

My district in Colorado has a growing Taiwanese population and their presence greatly enriches the district economically, culturally, and civically. Taiwanese entrepreneurs, business community, civic leaders, and students contribute greatly to our community. Over the past 50 years Taiwan has also proven itself as a significant political, economic, and security partner of the United States and I fully expect that strong relationship to grow even stronger in the years to come.

Having Taiwan as a meaningful partner clearly benefits both of our citizens, and I am proud that Colorado now has a direct relationship with Taiwan through the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office.

I look forward doing whatever I can to further enhance our close and growing relationship.

MIDDLE EAST WARS ARE A  
HORRIBLE MISTAKE

**HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 12, 2015*

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Sowell is one of this Nation's most-respected economists and syndicated columnists.

His latest column is about the lessons we should learn from our seemingly-endless war in Iraq.

Mr. Sowell wrote: "Going back to square one, what lessons might we learn from the whole experience of the Iraq War?"

If nothing else, we should never again imagine that we can engage in "nation-building" in the sweeping sense that term acquired in Iraq—least of all building a democratic Arab nation in a region of the world that has never had such a thing in a history that goes back thousands of years."

Mr. Sowell is right.

It has been a horrible mistake for this Nation to spend trillions of dollars on unnecessary wars in the Middle East.

We should never have gotten involved in all these civil wars between Shi'a and Sunni.

Yet, we keep on pouring mega-billions down these ratholes, voting for even more billions over there as recently as yesterday. When will we ever learn?

HONORING THE ROTARY CLUB OF  
NORTH CHICAGO AND THE RECIPIENTS OF THE ROTARY HUMANITARIAN PATRIOT AWARD

**HON. ROBERT J. DOLD**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 12, 2015*

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the outstanding community service of The Rotary Club of North Chicago and to recognize this year's recipients of The Rotary Humanitarian Patriot Award.